

USDA Seeks Comments on CRP at Nine Public Meetings

Tuesday, 01 September 2009

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20, 2009 - The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), today asked the public for comments on the Conservation Reserve Program and scheduled nine public meetings from Sept. 15 through Oct. 8 to solicit comments on the program. The meetings will be held in Washington, Montana, Minnesota, Kansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Georgia and Pennsylvania.

Topics to be discussed at the public meetings include provisions dealing with cropping history requirements, crop rotation practices, contract incentives, program enrollment terms and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) enrollment authority of 32 million acres established for the remainder of the 2008 Farm Bill.

"These workshops will be important to receive feedback about how we can make the Conservation Reserve Program more effective for producers as well as increase the environmental benefits of the program," said Farm Service Agency Administrator Jonathan Coppess.

USDA will consider each comment received at the public meetings and during the comment period when preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. This statement will help USDA decision-makers and the public with an analysis of the environmental benefits and potential impacts associated with implementing various changes to CRP consistent with the 2008 Farm Bill.

CRP is a voluntary program that supports the implementation of long-term conservation measures designed to improve the quality of ground and surface waters, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat on environmentally sensitive agricultural land. In return, CCC provides participants with rental payments and cost share assistance under contracts extending from 10 to 15 years. CRP is a CCC program administered by the FSA with the support of other federal and local agencies.

The nine public meetings are scheduled for:

- Sept. 15, 2009, from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn Spokane Airport
Spokane, Wash.
(509) 244-5866

-
Sept. 17, 2009, from 5 - 7 p.m.
Hampton Inn Great Falls
Great Falls, Mont.
(406) 453-2675

- Sept. 21, 2009, from 5 - 7 p.m.
AmericInn Lodge and Suites
Moorhead, Minn.

(218) 287-7100

-
Sept. 23, 2009, from 5 - 7 p.m.
Clarion Hotel
Manhattan, Kan.
(785) 539-5311

-
Sept. 25, 2009, from 5 - 7 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn, Springfield
Springfield, Ill.
(217) 529-7171

- Sept. 29, 2009, from 5 - 7 p.m.
Oklahoma City Marriott Hotel
Oklahoma City, Okla.
(405) 879-7042

-
Oct. 1, 2009 from 5 - 7 p.m.
La Quinta Inn and Suites
Clovis, NM
(575) 763-8777

-
Oct. 6, 2009 from 5 - 7 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn
Albany, Ga.
(229) 888-1590

-
Oct. 8, 2009 from 5 - 7 p.m.
Courtyard by Marriott
Harrisburg, Pa.
(717) 558-8544

Public comments are due by Oct. 19, 2009, to be considered in the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. You can submit comments online at: www.public.geo-marine.com; or Federal eRulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov; or E-mail comments to: CRPcomments@tecinc.com; or Mail or hand deliver comments to: CRP SEIS, c/o TEC Inc., 8 San Jose Dr., Suite 3-B, Newport News, VA 23606, Fax comments to: (757) 594-1469

More information is at: www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=copr&topic=crp

For more information on CRP please visit your FSA county office or at www.fsa.usda.gov.